GOLD HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 26 GOLD HILL, OR. 97525 December 1990

The Gold Hill Historical Society encompasses a five mile radius of the Gold Hill, Sams Valley, Tolo, Willow Springs, Rock Point, and Foots Creek areas. As a society we are trying to document as many of the early families as we can for our vertical files. In this effort we came across the story of Sam T. Hodges being killed at the Sardine Creek crossing in 1915. Here is the story of his family and how they relate to our area.

Daniel Webster Hodges was born December 3, 1828 in Franklin County, Missouri. While still in Missouri, Hodges and his first wife had two children, Martha and John Scott. John and Martha both married Hacketts, the Hacketts also being brother and sister.

Moss covered headstone of Daniel Webster Hodges is barely readable after 80 years. Pankey Park Cemetery Sams Valley, Oregon Photograph by Linda Genaw

The Hodges crossed the plains to California in 1851. It is not known what happened to Hodges' first wife. Hodges was married a second time to Texas native, Elizabeth Cullumber, on July 24, 1858 in San Louis Obispo, California. Seven children were born to this union. Their children were Amanda E., Samuel T., Daniel Allen Lee, Francis Marion, Nancy Lilly, Susan E. and Emily, who lived only eight hours.

The Hodges moved to Jackson County in 1866. They settled on a ranch near Table Rock, where they lived until 1868, when they moved back to California. The Hodges remained in Santa Cruz until the summer of 1873.

Once again the Hodges packed up their family and moved to the Rogue Valley. They settled on a 160 acre homestead on Long Branch Road, near Trail.

Amanda Ellen Hodges was born in Tulare, California November 3, 1859. She married F. W. Mitchell on June 25, 1876. C.C. Gall, Justice of the Peace, performed the ceremony. Amanda died at age 32 in Lodi, California June 29, 1892.

Samuel Thomas Hodges was born on December 12, 1861 in San Louis Obispo, California. Samuel married Isora Luellen Gall November 9, 1887, with Elder Martin Peterson officiating.

Daniel Allen Lee Hodges was born January 27, 1864 in Santa Cruz, California. Allen, as he was called, married Alice Noah, October 29, 1888. Alice's family were long-time residents of Sams Valley. Allen died August 12, 1938 at Eureka, California.

Francis Marion Hodges was born September 16, 1866 in Sams Valley, Oregon. He married Polly Anderson July 11, 1886. Marion died in Moscow, Idaho March 26, 1945 at age 78.

Nancy Lilly Hodges was born in Jackson County January 25, 1868. Martin Peterson united Lilly in marriage to J. B. Armstrong, December 22, 1886. Nancy died at age 20 April 25, 1888.

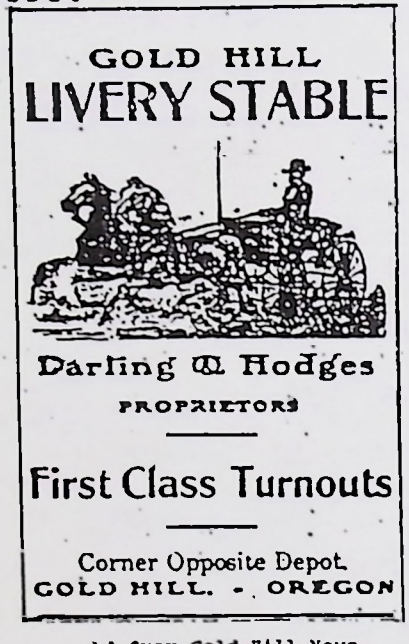
Susan Elizabeth Hodges was born in Santa Cruz, California December 12, 1869. She was married first to

William Macklin January 25, 1888. She was married to Thomas Raimey August 16, 1893. Susy died March 26, 1848 in Central Point, Oregon.

Sam's father Daniel died July 6, 1906 near Trail, at the age of 77. Soon after his death his mother sold the ranch and moved to Gold Hill where her son Sam lived.

Sam had been on his own since he was 16 years of age. He pursued various occupations until he was twenty-one. For the next 16 years he engaged in gold mining. Retiring from gold mining, his next venture was in the mercantile business.

Sam and Isora had four children while they lived in Sams Valley. Their son Albert Lee was born September 2, 1888. He was killed in a tragic accident at the age of 10. Millie Pearl was born December 29, 1892; Hattie Esther on August 28, 1894;and Letsy Ellen on April 22, 1898.



Ad from Gold Hill News Nov. 10,1910 author's collection

Sam and Isora Hodges moved to Gold Hill in 1900. They bought two lots from George Vose on First Avenue. When Sam's mother Elizabeth moved to Gold Hill, she remained in the house on First Avenue. Sam bought E.G. Perham's place at 651 5th Avenue in 1907, which is still standing.

Sam was well liked and respected in Gold Hill. He served on the City Council during the years 1904, 1905, 1908, 1909, 1910 & 1911.

In 1908 Sam bought one-half interest in Fred Peninger's livery business. This livery was where the present-day Gold Hill Texaco is now located on Second Avenue and Fourth Street. Sam and Ralph Darling bought lots 6,7,8,9, & 10 in block 25 from Grant Harrison. They then established a livery business under the name Darling & Hodges Gold Hill Livery.

Hodges was a busy man. Not only did he run the livery, but he was proprietor of the Gold Hill Hotel from 1912 until 1915.

The year 1915 was a very tragic one for the Hodges. When the south side of Gold Hill burned on May 5, 1915, the fire started at the Darling and Hodges Livery. Another stable was soon built though and it was business as usual.

Tragedy struck the Hodges family again on August 2, 1915, when Sam was struck by a train at the Sardine Creek crossing. The following article is reprinted exactly as it was in the Gold Hill News August 7, 1915.

AUTOIST SLAIN BY TRAIN 54

S. T. HODGES OF CITY, STRICKEN AT CROSSING

Dies Instantly in the wreckage of his car--Inquest Places No Blame in Verdict

Caught by the deadly impact of flier No. 54's pilot, on Sardine Creek grade crossing, Samuel T. Hodges, of this city was instantly killed in the tangled wreckage of his Ford car at 7:45 Monday evening. Within a train length the flier came to a full stop under emergency brakes.

Passengers and train crew thronged about the demolished machine, which was thrown a distance of fifty feet by the terrific force of the collision. The car was speedily lifted from the bruised body of its driver, but life was already extinct.

The accident was witnessed by manager H. A. Ensign, of the Sleepy Hollow ranch, and two boys, Verne Smith and William Meade. The latter were standing in the road, only a few score paces beyond the fatal crossing.

Two unknown motorists, whose car bore a Portland legend, were

MANY THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING:

Linda Annecston, Winona Nichols, Genevieve Heil, Alyce Bottleson, Mary Bradish, Crayetta Armstrong for working and to all of our members who baked goodies for the Bake Sale October 27. The money raised will help pay for our membership in the Oregon Historical Society.

Recognition and thanks should also be given to Clare Moore and Winona Nichols for their job on our budget. Clare has put in many hours on the budget for our Society. Next time you see her give her a HUG!

Thanks to everybody who donated items and worked at the recent rummage sale. Winona reported that we made $401.00.

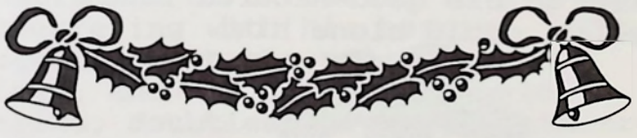
Mary Bradish, Crayetta Armstrong and Linda Genaw for working at the Halloween Carnival at Patrick School.

Thanks also go to Clare Moore, Winona Nichols, Linda Genaw, Mary Bradish and Crayetta Armstrong for sitting with our cookbooks at the Cookbook Fair sponsored by Meier and Frank November 9th and 10th. Thanks to all who baked or made something out of our cookbook for the shoppers to sample.

Ken Nichols deserves a big THANK YOU for volunteering to type our new accession cards. I hear he is hard at work and making great progress.

Lee Malone also needs a THANK YOU for being so observant and letting me know that A-1 Land Clearing was busy tearing down the brick building so I could get some photographs of the progress.

LMG Editor



We will be having a cookbook and calendar sale in front of D'Angelo's Pizza Parlor on December 8, 1990 starting at 10:00 AM. The cookbooks and 1991 calendars sell for $5.00 each. These make great stocking stuffers.

If you would like a 1991 calendar and can not make it to the sale, you can send your $5.00 plus $1.00 for postage to P.O. Box 26. We will mail them out promptly.

The cookbooks can be mailed to you for $5.00 plus additional $2.00 for postage.

MEMBER PROFILE

By Janet Sessions

Kenneth E. Nichols

Ed Francis Nichols arrived in Southern Oregon in the year of 1880. His Sams Valley homestead included part of Upper Table Rock and the present-day Modoc Orchard area. Son George Allen Nichols was born and raised here on this prime Rogue Valley land.

The Stallsworth family, including daughter Mattie, moved up from Northern California in 1906. When George Nichols married Mattie Stallsworth, the stage was set for another generation of Nichols' children to be born in the Rogue Valley. On March 14, 1910, their firstborn child, a son, came into this world at his grandparents' Willow Springs farm, up near the schoolhouse. Grandmother's yellow roses were probably budding out at about the same time. Now, in 1990, the long-abandoned schoolhouse is still perched on the steep hillside off Tolo Road, but all signs of Kenneth E. Nichols' birthplace have disappeared, even the sturdy yellow rosebush which faithfully continued to bloom for so many years after the farm structures were mere memories.

Kenneth and his two sisters attended the Willow Springs, Pankey, and Gold Hill (Hanby) schools. Their father worked at the local cement plant before moving his little brood south to Topanga Canyon in Southern California, where he was the manager of a large stock ranch. Neighboring Hollywood film-makers often used the ranch and stock as props in Western movies. Young Ken watched and met many famous "showbiz" cowboys of that era. He still remembers how some of them, such as Tom Mix, had stand-ins do virtually all of the actual riding in their films.

When Kenneth began to work on

KEN NICHOLS Photo by Linda Genaw

his own as a young man, he headed for his home state and became an apprentice ranger in Crater Lake National Park (1927-28). When the 1929 Depression hit, he was one of the many who lost their jobs. During the next few years he was lucky to find work in Rogue Valley pear orchards and packing houses. He and friend Harry Foley (another local pioneer descendent) often worked 10-11 hours a day, making 5 cents a lug-box for pears picked, and felt lucky to have the jobs. Logging also was a source of income during these hard times.

When he joined the United States Signal Corps his love of radio communication developed. Stationed in Hawaii from 1933 to 1936, he again came into contact with celebrities, this time as they boarded or disembarked the luxurious passenger ships which docked there. F.D.R. and Shirley Temple were just two of the many who posed for a photo with the young wireless operator from Southern Oregon.

During WWII Kenneth spent 32 months in England, the land of his ancestors. Here he further upgraded his radio electronics skills. Following the war years he worked at an auto dealership, radio repair shop, in logging, and ran his own radio and television repair shop in Medford, during television's infancy. In 1959 he settled in with the Civil Aeronautics Administration (now the F.A.A.), working out of Spokane, Washington, where he continued in electronic communications until his retirement in May 1972. (Mother Mattie, who lived with him after she was widowed, didn't live to see that proud day. She passed away in 1971.)

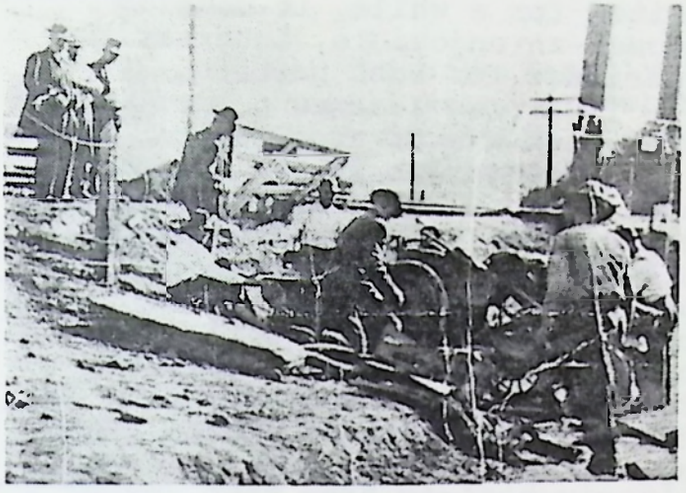
Newly retired, he packed up his Silver Streak travel tailer and headed out to see as many of America's national parks as possible. On the drive south, fate brought him to stop in Gold Hill and visit old friend and shirt-tail relative, Harry Steelman. That lucky visit forever changed Kenneth's bachelor way of life, as it was then that he first met Harry's niece and caregiver, Gold Hill native, Winona "Babe" Baker. The two became man and wife on October 11, 1972, and then Kenneth had a loving companion to share his camping trips to all of those national parks.

Retirement activities have included painting, photography, and remodeling of the lovely two story house they bought from Icie and Alvie Walker. Kenneth's love of radio continues to this day through his membership in the Society of Wireless Pioneers and the S.O. Amateur Radio Club. Seated in his home radio room, he maintains regular contact with old buddies from his 1930's wireless days. He and Winona still walk a couple of miles a day, keep up with their active poodles-Princess and Coquette, and stay abreast of current affairs through the use of what else - radio and television. Kenneth seems to have a perpetual smile on his good-natured face. Wish we could clone him!

The Birdseye house was destroyed by fire November 23.

The Birdseyes would like to hear if the community supports restoring the house. Write 3791 Rogue River Hwy. Gold Hill, OR 97525, or call 582-0202 or 582-3851.

couriers of the tragedy. They passed through Gold Hill immediately after the train, and came upon the scene of the accident within a few moments. Turning about, they raced back with the news. Local autos hurried to Sardine Creek, carrying physicians. The saddening identification of the victim followed.



The aftermath of the accident
GHHS #181

Mr. Hodges left this city shortly before the arrival of No. 54, in answer to a livery call. He was unaccompanied. Before his car had reached the creek bridge, one mile from town, the flier was almost even with it. Witnesses say that the doomed man was looking intently at the wheel, and made the short turn at the crossing without raising his head. He seemed unconscious of the approaching train. Directly upon the crossing it smashed into the Ford and its driver.

The theory that Mr. Hodges attempted to win across the crossing in a race with death is scouted. During the day he had frequently complained of a roaring in his ears, interfering with his hearing. This together with the noise of the river, and the hum of the auto engine, doubtless prevented him from noting the repeated whistle of the engine.

Tuesday afternoon Coroner Perl, of Medford, conducted the inquest. The engine crews, train crew, and other witnesses gave testimony.

It was shown that the whistle was sounded in the regular crossing warning, and that, as train and motorist approached the crossing, fireman Ben Lohr called to engineer Ed Kinney for an additional whistle, which was sounded, calling again, "Hold Her!" as the auto made the turn. The emergency brakes were immediately applied. The testimony of other witnesses tallied, in effect, with this.

After a brief session the jury returned a verdict of "accidental and unintentional death." Members of the jury were: J. M. Hutson, W. F. Blackert, G. B. Turner, C. S. Redfield, W. H. Miller and M. D. Bowers.

Mr. Hodges was a life-long resident of southern Oregon and Gold Hill. The shock of his tragic passing shrouded the city in a deep and general grief...

The above photograph was taken shortly after the accident. This is one of the grizzly reminders of the hazards encountered by many pioneers. Sam was one of many early settlers to be killed by a train.

Isora died at the Sanitarium in Ashland, Oregon April 28, 1918. She is also buried at the Pankey Park Cemetery.

The Hodges' daughters attended school in Gold Hill. Hattie Hodges has the distinction of being the first to graduate from the new Gold Hill High School, class of 1913. She was the sole graduate. The ceremony was held May 23, 1913 at the old Gold Hill Opera House. It used to sit on Fourth Avenue just down from the present Methodist Church.

Millie

Hattie

Letsy

Millie Hodges married Lee O. Walker December 13, 1916. Lee and Millie had one daughter, Sybil, who

married Charles Paine. Lee died in 1924. Millie was well-known in Gold Hill, serving as the city's telephone operator for many years. Millie Walker died in 1964 at age 71.

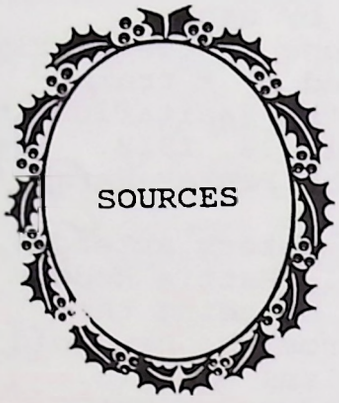
Hattie Hodges married Walter Yordon of Grants Pass, and they had one daughter, Patricia.

Letsy Hodges married Rowland Miller June 21, 1917. The Millers had two children, Rowland and Phyliss.

For more information on the Hodges family, visit the Southern Oregon Historical Society's Research Library. They have an excellent collection of family photographs.

Sue Waldren will be featuring Millie Hodges in a slide presentation for Women in History month this March.

(C) 1990 Linda Morehouse Genaw



Interview with Marion Miller, interview with Kay Bostwick, information from Allen Buckingham of Salt Lake City, Utah, Jackson County Marriage records, Jackson County Census records

Hodges vertical SOHS
Interview with Delos Walker
Jackson County Deeds records
Jackson County Assessor's records
Gold Hill News microfilm Medford Library

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

To Our Members,

As I sat there listening to a friend tell her life story for an oral history, a new thought came to mind.

Everyone has a story to tell, and if given the opportunity, they will share their life experiences. I feel that I have learned more about people and our area's past from these interviews than I have in any other way. Anyone who has ever conducted one of these interview may feel the same way.

Not only do you as the interviewer learn a great deal, you are also letting the person you're interviewing know that what they have to say is worth remembering.

Sometimes people are a bit nervous or hesitant about granting an interview, but once you've visited for a while, it usually becomes an enjoyable, interesting experience for both parties.

I've also learned a great deal more about myself as a person, thaen I ever thought possible. Because once you have talked with several people about what has made their life meaningful and what they consider their most important accomplishments, you begin to see a common thread among all people. It's a wonderful opportunity to be able to learn from others in this way.

I sincerely hope that any of you who are interested in either granting an interview or learning how to interview someone, will call one of our members today to make arrangements. It will be a decision that you'll be very glad you made.

Cindy Faubion, President

HISTORICAL ITEMS OF INTEREST

<u>Gold Hill News June 1. 1906</u>

Another drunken tourist fell into the clutches of Marshal Harvey, Saturday night, and after languishing overnight in the city's bastille, was allowed to depart - painfully sober and full of good resolutions never to do it again.

<u>Gold Hill News February 1, 1907</u>

FOR RENT - Good dwelling, seven rooms, barn and outbuildings with four acres of good garden land at $8.00 per month. Inquire at the Gold Hill News.

<u>Gold Hill News April 19, 1907</u>

A trio of husky Italians leading a pair of mangy old bears paid a visit to Gold Hill this Tuesday morning. Their stay was not a howling financial success.

Above items from the <u>Gold Hill News</u>
Submitted by Cindy Faubion

O. Stallsworth stopped by the office and asked Gene to please pass this message on: Please let people know that Dowden (Douden) Falls is not Nugget Falls or any other silly name. It was named after Ernie Lyman's grandfather or grandmother. When people call it by another name it gripes him!

Good news! We have finally decided on a logo. We have combined four of the seven final designs to create one. Logo chairman Ted Wharton will take the material to Art Goss, who will put the combined design together. We should have it back by the December 18th meeting.

Ted Wharton, who has also been taking care of our scrapbook,needs someone to take his place by January. Ted will be laid up while he is recovering from an upcoming surgery. Please call Cindy at 855-1902 to volunteer.

ATTENTION

We have rented space in the Bible Baptist Church at 635 Second Avenue for our office (next door to Swede's.) We will be meeting there December 18 at 7:00 p.m.. This should be a fun meeting. You are invited to bring an heirloom of your choosing to share. Everyone will be given 5 to 10 minutes to give a history of their item of interest. Hope to see you there.

The meeting in January will be the 21st at 7:00 p.m.

The Oregon State Preservation Board accepted the Hanby nomination unanimously on October 25, 1990. The application will be forwarded to Washington D.C. for entry into the National Register for Historic Places. Aric Genaw, Amanda Huffman, Jeremy Warren and I would like to thank the Society for all of their support during this project. We know that many of our members attended the Gold Hill School, and hope that our work will enable many future students to do the same. LMG

MEMBERS DOING EXCITING THINGS:

Congratulations to member Art Campbell who is one of the authors who were invited by the Oregon Historical Society to the 24th annual Holiday Cheer & Author's Party in Portland, December 2, 1990. Art has been very busy this year promoting his book Antelope the Saga of a Western Town. We wish you the best, Art.

Glenn and Gloria Ray of Ramsey Road, Gold Hill, have been spending their winters in Mexico. Not vacationing like most snowbirds, they spend their time working at the "Foundation For His Ministry" an orphanage at Colonia Guererro, Baja, Mexico. There are approximately 70 children living there, from newborns to children 16 years old.

They have a small staff and lots of volunteers. Glenn, being a maintenance engineer, finds plenty of work. Each year there are generators, trucks, refrigerators, sewing machines, electric mixers and broken plumbing that need an expert's touch. What is too heavy for an arthritic Grandpa, he accomplishes with the help of the older boys. He seems to be a pretty good teacher.

Gloria cooks, sews and loves the children.

With the children, staff, volunteers and guests, they average 150 people for meals. The nursery holds 10 babies, and that means shifts to care for them. The rest is as near homestyle living as possible. School children wear school uniforms made at the orphanage.

A very important part of the orphanage work is the outreach program to the Oaxcans. These people are like the migrant workers here, except much poorer. Their housing is just what they can scrounge for themselves. They live in appalling poverty.

The Orphanage maintains a soup kitchen, food bank and health clinic for these people.

After spending the holidays with their children and grandchildren, Glenn and Gloria will crank up the motorhome and head south.

This will be the fifth year in Mexico for the Rays. Happy "Missionarying", Glenn and Gloria.

by Gene Heil

For those of you who are wondering who Professor Chuck Wharton is (from the article in the October newsletter), and what he has to do with Gold Hill, I will add the following;

His parents, Howard E. Wharton and Ida Fay (Starns) Wharton moved to Gold Hill in 1917 and purchased the Gold Hill News.

Ted Wharton was born October 26, 1919. A sister June was born in 1921 but did not survive. Ben "Chuck" was born March 29, 1926. Shortly after Chuck was born, the Whartons sold the newspaper to C.J. Shorb.

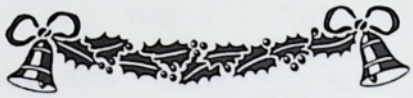
The Whartons continued to live in Gold Hill until 1933, when they moved to Medford.

Did you know that any member of the Gold Hill Historical Society may submit articles for the newsletter?

The articles must pertain to families or events of our area, which includes the five-mile radius I mentioned on page one. Photographs and documents which add to the interest of a story are encouraged.

Articles may also be submitted about any member of our society or activity they are involved in.

Send articles to our P.O. Box 26 or to your editor Linda Genaw at 7477 Maple Lane, Central Point, Ore 97502. You can also turn articles in at any meeting to Linda Genaw.



PLEASE REMEMBER

Dues are due by December 31, 1990. This will be your last newsletter so don't delay.

We only have about 50 calendars left so if you want one, include an additional $6.00 with your $5.00 membership fee and we will mail your calendar to you.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM YOUR NEWSLETTER STAFF

LINDA GENAW
CLARE MOORE
GENE HEIL
MARY LOU CAMPBELL

If you, or a friend would like to help us preserve the rich history of Gold Hill and the surrounding area, receive the historical society newsletter, and other fun stuff, complete the form below and return it with your $5.00 check or money order for a Family Membership to:

Gold Hill Historical Society
P. O. Box 26
165 4th St.
Gold Hill, Oregon 97525

Name_____

Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

Telephone_____

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